



## **Week 1 Assignment**

### **Overview**

In this course, you will develop the knowledge and skills of an instructional leader who also effectively manages curriculum and instruction. The course assignments will guide you as you increase your leadership abilities in the areas of curriculum management, application of state law and local policy as they relate to curriculum and instruction, and campus improvement planning.

In this week's assignment, you will summarize required curriculum components and high school graduation requirements, describe the components of the TEA learning system and make suggestions for improvement, and collect data to begin decision-making on a learner-centered staff development session. This week, you should:

- Identify and summarize the components of a state-required curriculum.
- Analyze the components of the TEA learning system and make suggestions for improvements.
- Analyze state-generated data and a Campus Improvement Plan for the purpose of decision-making.

**Rubric**

Use the following rubric to guide your work.

	<b>Accomplished</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b>
<b>Part 1: Summary of Curriculum Requirements</b>	Clearly summarizes the requirements of the Texas-mandated curriculum with seven paragraphs – one for each component. <b>(3 points)</b>	Summarizes the requirements of the Texas-mandated curriculum. Not all seven components addressed. <b>(2 points)</b>	Does not summarize the requirements of the Texas-mandated curriculum. <b>(0 points)</b>
<b>Part 2: TEA Learning System Components</b>	Effectively summarizes the state and local provisions of the TEA learning system. <b>(3 points)</b>	Summarizes the state and local provisions of the TEA learning system. <b>(2 points)</b>	Does not summarize the state and local provisions of the TEA learning system. <b>(0 points)</b>
<b>Part 3: Gathering Data for Decision Making</b>	Makes an in-depth analysis of AEIS data and a CIP to select a content area and objective for a learner-centered staff development session. <b>(3 points)</b>	Analyzes AEIS data and a CIP to select a content area/objective for a learner-centered staff development. <b>(2 points)</b>	Does not analyze AEIS data and a CIP to select a learner-centered staff development topic. <b>(0 points)</b>
<b>Mechanics</b>	No errors in grammar, spelling or punctuation. <b>(1 point)</b>		Responses lack clarity and depth and/or multiple errors in grammar, spelling or punctuation. <b>(0 points)</b>

**Week 1 Assignment: Curriculum and the TEA Learning System****Part 1: Summary of Curriculum Requirements**

Knowledge of the state's required curriculum provides an emerging leader with a foundation for decision making. In this part of the assignment, you will examine what Texas law says about curriculum.

**Directions:**

From your Web address box, access the TEA Web site

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter074/index.html>.

Read and study the following sections of the Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part II:

74.1 Essential Knowledge and Skills

74.2 Description of a Required Elementary Curriculum

74.3 Description of a Required Secondary Curriculum

74.4 English Language Proficiency Standards

74.62 Minimum High School Program

74.63 Recommended High School Program

74.64 Distinguished Achievement High School Program—Advanced High School Program

**(Note: Requirements changed as of the 2007-2008 school year, and §74.63 and §74.64 reflect the new 4 x 4 requirements.)**

Compose a two-page summary of the seven components. Include at least one paragraph on each section. Type your paper in the expandable box below.

**Summary of Curriculum Requirements**

Section 74.1 Essential Knowledge and Skills specifies the required foundation curriculum components by grade range, including English language arts, mathematics, science; and social studies, and also defines the required enrichment curriculum a district must offer including languages other than English, health/PE, art, economics, career and technology classes and technology applications. This section specifies that a district may add elements at its discretion but cautions that the district may not omit or delete any of the required elements. Detailed chapter citations are included to give in-depth detailed analysis for each subject. This section ends with source citations, any amendment details and the effective date of these requirements.

Section 74.2 Description of a Required Elementary Curriculum builds upon the information presented in section 74.1 and further defines from kindergarten through fifth grade that sufficient time must be provided both for teachers to teach and for students to learn the foundation and enrichment curriculum subjects, but allows for various arrangements and settings to be used, including mixed-age programs permitting flexible learning arrangements for instruction that is developmentally appropriate for all students in order to support attainment of both the course and grade level standards. This section ends with source citations, any amendment details and the effective date of these requirements.

Section 74.3 Description of a Required Secondary Curriculum in Part A builds upon the information presented in section 74.1 and defines for grades 6-8 grade that sufficient time must be provided both for teachers to teach and for students to learn the foundation and enrichment curriculum subjects, but allows for various arrangements and settings to be used, including mixed-age programs permitting flexible learning arrangements for instruction that is developmentally appropriate for all students in order to

support attainment of both the course and grade level standards. Part B covers grades 9-12; paragraph 1 builds upon the information presented in section 74.1 and defines that sufficient time must be provided both for teachers to teach and for students to learn the required curriculum, but allows for various arrangements and settings to be used, including mixed-age programs permitting flexible learning arrangements for instruction that is developmentally appropriate for all students in order to support attainment of both the course and grade level standards. Paragraph 2 details all the courses that a district must offer in high school, and notes that the district must maintain evidence that the students have had an opportunity to take these courses; the courses range from English I-IV to the various mathematics, science, fine arts and career technology courses. Paragraph 3 states that districts may offer additional courses approved by the State Board of Education in order to satisfy graduation requirements. Paragraph 4 provides details that if a school district will not offer the required courses every year it must notify all students of that fact. This paragraph ends with instructions that districts must offer courses in which ten or more students are enrolled or that are required for graduation, and gives guidance for the situation where less than ten students are enrolled in a course. Paragraph 5 specifies that students entering Grade 9 beginning with the 2007-2008 school year must be offered, in the required curriculum for both the recommended and advanced high school programs, a course including a research writing component. This section ends with Part C which covers both foundation and enrichment curriculum for Grades 6-12 and states that promotion and high school graduation requirements must be able to be met in a timely manner. This section ends with source citations, any amendment details and the effective date of these requirements.

Section 74.4 English Language Proficiency Standards specifies the English language proficiency standards for English language Learners (ELL), those students who do not speak English fluently or natively and are thus learning the English language. Part A introduces the concepts and standards by which curriculum is modified or designed to support these students for whom English is a second language and speaks to skill acquisition for these students. Part A explains the different proficiency levels within the language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing and proficiency level descriptors to be used. Part B identifies school district responsibilities regarding ELL students. Part C identifies cross-curricular second language acquisition knowledge and skills and defines detailed student expectations for of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Part D contains proficiency level descriptors for ELL students at the beginning, intermediate, advanced, or advanced high stage of English language acquisition by domain, content area and grade level. This section ends with source citations, any amendment details and the effective date of these requirements.

Section 74.62 Minimum High School Program details the minimum expectations a student must meet to complete high school in Texas. Part A explains that a student must earn at least 22 credits to complete the Minimum High School Program. Part B defines the core courses a student must demonstrate proficiency in; English I-IV (with substitution criteria), Mathematics (three credits including Algebra and Geometry), Science (two credits including Biology and IPC), two and a half credits of Social Studies including World History, World Geography and United States History and Government, a half-credit of Economics and one credit of an academic elective. The PE requirements are detailed as one and a half credits including Personal Fitness, and one-half credit of some form of Health. One-half credit of Speech is required as Communications Applications, and finally one credit in Technology Applications such as Computer Science, Multimedia, etc. The final five and a half credits consist of general electives. This section ends with source citations, any amendment details and the effective date of these requirements.

Section 74.63 Recommended High School Program details the recommended expectations a student must meet to complete high school in Texas. Part A explains that a student must earn at least 26 credits to complete the Recommended High School Program. Part B defines the core courses a student must demonstrate proficiency in; English I-IV (with substitution criteria), Mathematics (four credits including Algebra, Geometry and an advanced math such as Calculus, etc.), Science (four credits including Biology and other choices such as IPC, Physics, etc., and there are guidelines on which courses may be taken in which year), three and a half credits of Social Studies including World History, World Geography and United States History and Government, a half-credit of Economics, and two credits of languages other than English. The PE requirements are detailed as one and a half credits including Personal Fitness, and one-half credit of some form of Health. One-half credit of Speech is required as Communications

Applications, one credit in Technology Applications such as Computer Science, Multimedia, etc., and one credit in Fine Arts. The final three and a half credits consist of general electives. This section ends with cautions that no substitutions are allowed except those as spelled out, source citations, any amendment details and the effective date of these requirements.

Section 74.64 Distinguished Achievement High School Program—Advanced High School Program details the expectations a student must meet to complete high school in Texas to attain the distinction of Distinguished Achievement. Part A explains that a student must earn at least 26 credits to complete the Recommended High School Program. Part B defines the core courses a student must demonstrate proficiency in; English I-IV (with substitution criteria), Mathematics (four credits including Algebra, Geometry and an advanced math such as Calculus, etc.), Science (four credits including Biology and other choices such as IPC, Physics, etc., and there are guidelines on which courses may be taken in which year), three and a half credits of Social Studies including World History, World Geography and United States History and Government, a half-credit of Economics, and three credits of languages other than English. The PE requirements are detailed as one and a half credits including Personal Fitness, and one-half credit of some form of Health. One-half credit of Speech is required as Communications Applications, one credit in Technology Applications such as Computer Science, Multimedia, etc., and one credit in Fine Arts There are two and a half credits required to consist of general electives, and a combination of Advanced Measures such a research projects, test data indicating specific scores showing college level achievement, college academic courses, advanced tech courses or dual credit courses, with a grade of 3.0 or higher. This section ends with cautions that no substitutions are allowed except those as spelled out, source citations, any amendment details and the effective date of these requirements.

## Part 2: TEA Learning System Components

In this section of the assignment, you will describe the minimum state provisions of the six components of the TEA learning system, desirable local provisions for each component, and your preliminary ideas for improvement.

### Directions:

Review the components of the TEA learning system in the Week 1 lecture and the information you gathered in Part 1 of the assignment. As you review, think about desirable local provisions for each component. Consider strengths and weaknesses in local provisions.

Access the Texas Education Code at <http://tlo2.tlc.state.tx.us/statutes/ed.toc.htm> and/or the Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, (TAC): Part II Texas Education Agency at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/index.html>. Peruse these sites for more information about the TEA learning system components.

Collaborate online with two colleagues to complete the table on the TEA learning system by describing the minimum state provisions, desirable local provisions for each of the six components, and your preliminary suggestions for improvement. Your suggestions may change after completing the course.

### TEA Learning System Components

Collaborator #1: Roger		Collaborator #2: Elizabeth	
Component	Minimum State Provision	Desirable Local Provision	Preliminary Suggestion for Improvement
Learning Goals	The Division of Curriculum at the Texas Education Agency oversees the development and implementation of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) in public schools. According to the Education Code Chapter 4 (Section 4.001) Texas children should be provided with the quality education that will allow them to fully participate in the future in the social, economic, and educational opportunities of our state and nation. In addition, Section 4.002 states that students must demonstrate exemplary performance in reading, mathematics, science, and social studies. This means that our goals are to educate children in the foundation curriculum.	This depends upon the school district. We were able to provide two examples for this area that are as follows.  Example 1: In Beaumont ISD teachers from various schools are hired to work on curriculum for the district. Each grade level and course among the various schools works from the same curriculum that is based on the TEKS. In recent years, curriculum has become more uniform with teachers having less freedom about what materials to cover because every teacher must show mastery of	We have several suggestions for improving the learning goals. These are mentioned below.  The Concepts of Ed. Tech course stressed that a rapidly changing world demands continual revision of learning goals for 21st century students. One article even suggested that <u>students should participate in determining learning goals and curriculum</u> . The learners themselves may be better able than their teachers to perceive what knowledge and skills the future will require of them. One reward for students of

		<p>objectives on 6 weeks tests. These tests, created at the district level, measure mastery of TAKS objectives. Therefore every teacher at a given grade level must be teaching the same TEKS-based objectives at the same time. Teachers are given very little input on learning goals at the local level. Every aspect of the school day is TEKS driven.</p> <p>Example 2:</p> <p>At the Rio Hondo ISD the district has adopted the CSCOPE curriculum. As is state-mandated, the learning goals (the curriculum) are TEKS based. CSCOPE has pre-planned lessons available to educators for use in guiding students to master the foundation curriculum.</p>	<p>advancing from grade to grade should be a greater voice in designing their educational experience. Not only might the inclusion of student voices make education more relevant to students, but they might also value their educations more if they work together. We feel that schools should consider listening to their students' ideas and opinions, at least in the upper grades.</p> <p>Even though learning goals are based upon the TEKS, there is still too much variation between the curriculum that each district implements. Perhaps a uniform curriculum with a scope and sequence that is easy to follow, would allow us to guide students in mastering the learning goals.</p>
Curriculum Documents	<p>The State Board of Education must provide funds for free textbooks for all public school students and Teacher Editions for all teachers. A State Textbook Review Panel determines adoption of materials. Local school boards determine local policy for new instructional materials.</p> <p>Curriculum documents include the written curriculum produced by schools and districts (based on state standards) as well as the instructional materials (such as textbooks) used by students and teachers in the classroom. The written curriculum serves as a plan to guide the taught curriculum, which is what happens in the classroom. The tested curriculum reveals the</p>	<p>This depends upon the school district. Our examples for this area are as follows.</p> <p>Local school boards should have content experts, teachers, parents, administrators and other stakeholders represented to review school curriculum. The board should use student data (AEIS) to guide its selection of research based programs. In addition, they should look for and adopt material for differentiated instruction for English language learners, low performing</p>	<p>We have noted various suggestions for improving curriculum documents. These are mentioned below.</p> <p>The Legislative Budget Board has already recommended <u>establishing statewide committees to develop curriculum guides</u> that will be freely available to districts as curriculum development and management tools. <u>Teachers who have taught a course for 10 or more years should be able to create their own texts and materials</u></p>



	<p>extent to which learning goals have been reached. Schools and districts must strive for alignment of written, taught, and tested curriculum in order to optimize student achievement. The Texas administrative code delineates all courses in the required curriculum (foundation and enrichment) as well as standards for English language learners; districts may add courses, but they may not fail to offer any courses identified here. <u>Textbooks and other instructional materials must be evaluated by state review panels</u> (composed of educators appointed by the Texas Commissioner of Education) before they are adopted by the SBOE. Local school boards determine local policy for choosing instructional materials, but these materials must be selected from those that are SBOE adopted and then ratified by the school district's Board of Trustees. Instructional materials chosen through this process are provided to students and districts free of charge. Only materials for enrichment courses may be non-adopted, but districts must pay part of the cost.</p>	<p>students, and GATE.</p> <p>In our example, CSCOPE experts select the curriculum documents and materials. Teachers can reproduce the pages for educational purposes; this includes assessments and students handouts. Unfortunately, textbooks for the curriculum are still being ordered and created.</p>	<p>(such as software) for classroom use in both foundation and enrichment courses. In lieu of SBOE adoption, <u>local review panels could be established to ensure quality</u>. Also, adoption of more <u>electronic texts</u> would be more cost effective, while allowing for materials to be easily updated.</p>
Instructional Program	<p>The Division of Curriculum provides information and guidance in the following content and program areas: Bilingual/English as a Second Language, Career and Technical Education, Early Childhood Education, English Language Arts and Reading, Fine Arts, Advanced Academic Services, Health/Physical Education, Languages Other Than English, Master Teacher Programs, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Texas Adolescent Literacy</p>	<p>According to Chapter 74 of the Texas Education Code, a school district may add elements at its discretion, but it "must not delete or omit instruction in the foundation and enrichment curriculum specified by law." For the most part, we found that while the districts we work for tend to allow for additional courses, no state-mandated courses are omitted.</p>	<p>A common belief among teachers is that the course scope and sequence must follow chapter by chapter of their textbook. A textbook is only a resource that provides information. A course curriculum should be based on building both a solid foundation of knowledge and skills and student application of problem solving and decision-making.</p>



	<p>Academies, Technology Applications, Texas Math Initiative, Texas Reading Initiative, Texas Reading First Initiative, and Texas Spain Initiative.</p> <p>Furthermore, in accordance with the State Board of Education (Chapter 28, section 28.001 of Education Code), the instructional program should prepare students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in all subject areas (which include being able to: read, write, compute, problem solve, think critically, apply technology, and communicate). A school district that offers K-12 grade education must offer a foundation curriculum, as well as, an enrichment curriculum. In addition, a variety of teaching strategies can be used to instruct students.</p>		<p>Students need to learn through understanding rather than memorization in order to successfully comprehend and find value in the course content.</p> <p>We also think that students can benefit from an online program or a more technology-oriented instructional program. We suggest implementing a program during computer time at school, in order to help students learn the essential knowledge and skills through another mode of learning.</p>
Staff Development Program	<p>Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) is the State's approved instrument for appraising teachers and identifying areas that would benefit from staff development. Cornerstones of the process include a minimum of one 45-minute observation and completion of the Teacher Self-Report form. PDAS includes 51 criteria within eight domains reflecting the Proficiencies for Learner-Centered Instruction adopted in 1997 by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC). The domains are: active, successful student participation in the learning process; learner-centered instruction; evaluation and feedback on student progress; management of student discipline, instructional strategies, time/materials; professional communication professional development; compliance with policies,</p>	<p>The professional development and appraisal system (PDAS) functions to align teacher evaluations with staff development needs. Teacher appraisal systems are either recommended by the Commissioner of Education or locally developed and adopted by a school district according to the Commissioner's rules (Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 7, Ch. 244.2). Just as learner centered instruction must be taking place in the classroom of each teacher (which is measured by the PDAS), the staff development that teachers participate in must model this educationally effective</p>	<p>One suggestion for improvement would be to <u>have the teachers be part of self selected learning communities</u> where they can collaborate to improve their own craft and share best practices. This would be staff development time throughout the year that is set aside for these groups. For example, one group may decide to study how to integrate math and science, or better ways to use technology in the classroom. These learning groups would help the teachers have ownership of their professional development and allow them to work together with their peers, something always in short supply. Too often</p>

	<p>operating procedures and requirements; improvement of all students' academic performance. The Texas Education Code (Title 2, Subtitle D, Ch 21, Subchapter J, Sec 21.451-21.457) states the requirements for staff development. Staff development must be conducted in accordance with standards by the district and be designed to improve education in the district. Staff development must be largely campus-based and related to achieving campus goals. District-wide development can be used for technology and conflict resolution training as well as discipline policies and procedures. Schools may apply for grants to fund curriculum and instruction training. Training and materials are available for math, reading, science and LEP teachers.</p>	<p>practice. Using PDAS data, principals can plan staff development in needed areas on their campuses. Principals must complete the 36 hour Instructional Leadership Development training (offered through regional education service centers) in order to obtain appraiser certification. Among the skills principals learn during this training are the requirements under Texas Law regarding appraisal and staff development. We could not find these requirements for staff development. They are not in the Texas Admin. Code or Texas Educ. Code.</p> <p>Here's what we found at <a href="http://ritter.tea.tx.us/girfaq/teacher.html#8">http://ritter.tea.tx.us/girfaq/teacher.html#8</a></p> <p>Under Section 21.401 of the Texas Ed. Code, teacher contracts must be for a minimum of 187 days of service. Under Section 25.081, a school district must provide 180 days of instruction for students. How many of the remaining seven days are used for staff development is determined locally. So we concluded that decisions about staff development are entirely up to the district administrators and principals.</p>	<p>staff development relies on outside "experts" that have no stake in the game and ignores the years of experience that already exists at a school site.</p>
Measurement System	<p>The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) was implemented beginning in spring 2003. By law, all eligible public school students in Texas are assessed in mathematics in grades 3-10 and exit level;</p>	<p>Student evaluation through classroom assessment has generally been used to assess student learning. Grades are assigned in letters (eg. A, B, C, D, F),</p>	<p>Traditional assessments typically ask students to select the right answer to a posed question based on the ability to recall and recognize facts and ideas.</p>

	<p>reading in grades 3-9; writing in grades 4 and 7; English language arts in grades 10 and exit level; science in grades 5, 8, 10, and exit level; and social studies in grades 8, 10, and exit level. Students in special education who meet the eligibility requirements take an accommodated version called TAKS (Accommodated). TAKS and TAKS (Accommodated) are also available in Spanish for eligible students.</p>	<p>ranges (eg. 4.0-1.0), descriptors, (eg. Excellent, satisfactory, unsatisfactory), or percentages. For secondary schools, class ranks are based on the student's cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA), which is the mean GPA from all academic terms within a school year.</p>	<p>Assessment should use quantitative as well as qualitative measurement. Teachers should incorporate more authentic assessment with hands-on, open-ended problems that stimulate real world applications. The underlying concept is for the students to produce evidence of accomplishing curriculum goals while gaining problem solving skills and true understanding of the content.</p>
Administrative Procedures	<p>The Texas Administrative Code (TAC) are rules adopted by the State Board of Education (SBOE) and the Commissioner of Education as part of a larger body of state agency rules that are collected and published by the Office of the Secretary of State. State agency rule writers, in cooperation with the Office of the Secretary of State, had begun the task of organization and systematic dissemination of state agency rules in 1975 with the passage of the Administrative Procedure and Texas Register Act.</p>	<p>Education administrators provide instructional leadership and establish policies and procedures. The principal of each school sets the academic tone and actively works with teachers to develop and maintain high curriculum standards, develop mission statements, and set performance goals and objectives. Principals also meet with other administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community stakeholders to gain inputs for decision-making and setting school policies and goals.</p>	<p>Administrators have a crucial role in our districts. They provide teachers, paraprofessionals, and other staff with directives the facilitate student learning and mastery of the TEKS. Principals develop our standards and campus improvement plan. Some suggestions for improvement in this area are that principals need to be well prepared to address their staff and willing to listen to concerns. They must inform teachers of the curriculum that is to be implemented ahead of time. For example, the administrator at my district did not inform teachers that the curriculum would be changing until a week before school began this year. As a teacher, I felt lost and uncertain about starting this school year without first being familiar with the material and curriculum that was to be</p>

			<p>implemented.</p> <p>In addition, students learn best through modeling. The “do-as-I-say-not-as-I-do” model has very limited effectiveness. As students look up to teachers, teachers look to school administrators to keep true to their words. A simple example would be paper usage. Under budget cuts and environmental concerns, teachers have been asked to limit printing of handouts and running class sets of exams. This was accepted as a reasonable expectation without contest until administrators began to print out memos and notices for the entire faculty and staff after an email has already been sent out containing identical information. A responsible education administrator is a role model for teachers as well as students and should act accordingly.</p>
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How can understanding the components of the TEA learning system assist you in your work as an instructional leader?

Understanding the components of the TEA learning system can assist me in my work as an instructional leader by giving me a foundation of knowledge regarding what is required to be offered to students and what is recommended as supplemental enrichment curriculum, ensuring that as I design and manage my local curriculum I am complying with all TEA regulations, guiding my staff appropriately regarding the classes we may offer, and providing to my students everything TEA recommends to be sure they have the best chance of mastering the skills in the curriculum, passing the TAKS test, and becoming life-long learners. Knowing the TEA learning system also helps me evaluate requests from students for specialized courses to see whether or not they meet TEA guidelines, and helps me defend course offerings that may be unpopular with my staff or community or that have low enrollment.

Why is important that an instructional leader improve the components of the TEA learning system?

It is important that an instructional leader improve the components of the TEA learning system so that the components, while still meeting all TEA requirements, and better focused to meet the needs of the local student population and the abilities and specialties of the local teacher population. As the State basically provides for the required minimums, it is also important to improve the components to provide additional opportunities for enrichment and for acquiring supplemental knowledge and skills that may be required to prepare students for an unknown future or to keep up with the rapidly changing technology skills needed to prepare students for the job market.

**Part 3: Gathering Data for Decision Making**

A critical skill for an instructional leader is the ability to make data-based decisions. You will practice this skill as you begin work on a learner-centered staff development session. You will select a school—ideally one in which you work, review its AEIS data and Campus Improvement Plan (CIP), and select a content area/objective for improvement. You are not required to present the staff development during this course, but you must have a principal approve your agenda and arrange a time with the principal for presentation of the session.

**Directions:**

Access the 2006-07 AEIS Campus Reports at:

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/2007/campus.srch.html>.

Complete the form to select a school and access a campus report.

Review the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) data, answer questions about the data, and identify four content areas that need improvement.

Review the selected school's Campus Improvement Plan (CIP). Answer questions about the data, and locate two objectives for each of the four content areas identified in the AEIS data.

Based on the data, choose one content-area and an objective within that content area as the focus of a learner-centered staff development session.

**Data-Based Reflection and Decision Making**

Is there anything in the AEIS or CIP data that you do not understand? If so, what would you like clarified?

I have dealt with this type of performance data before and am familiar with it. However, it continues to concern me that although the Technology Applications TEKS are critical for the students and are required by the State, they are not tested, and there is no form of mastery or competency in technology that feeds into the AEIS or other rating systems, despite the fact technology is critical for these students. We do address technology in our CIP but as ratings are not affected by it, it receives less space and attention in the CIP than other areas such as ELL which are seen as critical to instruction and performance.

What about the data surprises you? What about the data concerns you?

I chose our La Vernia Junior High School, and was surprised to find that at the Campus level in Grade 8 Mathematics we actually had higher mastery rates in 2006 (85%) than in 2007 (81%). I knew we took a hit in this area but had not realized we actually experienced negative trending to this extent. What concerns me most is that when examining the sub-populations, we found that this trend was due in large part to a most alarming drop in the performance of the Economically Disadvantaged, which dropped from 75% mastery in 2006 to 59% mastery in 2007, and there was a similar significant drop in mastery for the Hispanic sub-population who dropped from 74% mastery in 2006 to 63% mastery in 2007. Although there were across-the-board drops in mastery for all sub-populations, it is far more significant for the Hispanics and Economically Disadvantaged, which shows we really need to re-examine the opportunities these students have for instruction and support. The problem does not seem to be language-related for the Hispanics as their Reading and Writing scores are in line with the rest of the population, so there has to be some level of support or instruction missing for the Economically Disadvantaged and Hispanic sub-populations that is either not needed by the others or perhaps is absent at the student's home.

How does the information fit with your feelings about how the students at this school are doing?

Although I knew Mathematics was an area being addressed at the Junior High in their Campus Improvement Plans, and in Professional Development, and was the subject of much discussion in faculty meetings, I was surprised to see the biggest problem so isolated to the sub-populations. I would have expected a more even distribution of poor performance, and have now realized we cannot take anything for granted. This crept up on Junior High due to our unique demographics; as a growing rural district, for years the sub-populations were too small to count on the AEIS report, so no one on the teaching staff was really paying attention until the sub-pops grew and the problem smacked them in the face. Although most of our students are doing well at this campus, and we have good teachers with good intentions, this is a case where the teachers only learn when they experience firsthand the unintended effects of their practices, whether intentional or unintentional. Still, this is a very good campus overall and is performing well above State average. The school even received Gold Performance indicators for Social Studies.

Does it seem to differ from what you have personally experienced? Did the students do as well as you and the school expected?

There is clearly an expectation for all our students to perform well, and at relatively the same level across the sub-populations, but I have experienced firsthand a definite student-imposed division within our schools between the "haves" and the "have nots". Unlike other districts I have been in, there is not really a division between student groups here based on ethnicity, or between "jocks" and "nerds", etc., but if you go into the lunch room you are definitely aware the students divide themselves based on income; there is



a pretty clear division between the “haves” and “have nots” which the students impose themselves as they choose seating areas..

This poor performance in Mathematics was surprising as the Junior High School teachers and administrators had thought they were doing a good job. They were also quite surprised at the vast difference in performance between the sub-populations, and were shocked into the realization that they obviously are not providing adequate instruction or support to all students.

On the basis of the data you examined, in which areas of the curriculum are students performing well?

Students are performing very well in Reading and Writing in grade 7, and in Reading and Social Studies in grade 8. We outperform the State scores significantly, and our Social Studies scores are so high there is almost no room for improvement – many students received Commended Performance and overall we received Gold Performance indicators.

On the basis of the data you examined, in which area(s) of the curriculum are students performing poorly? Why do you think students are performing poorly in those areas?

Students are performing poorly in Math in grade 7, and in Math and Science in grade 8; grade 8 Math is particularly worrisome in that students lost progress; they did not perform as well in 2007 as they did in 2006. As noted previously, the scores were particularly bad for the sub-populations of Hispanics and especially the Economically Disadvantaged, and these students performed significantly lower than their peers.

I think students are performing poorly in these areas because we are obviously not providing a support system for those students who are less likely to have sufficient parental support at home due to economic conditions or who may be in a home in which English may not be the primary spoken language.

Complete the following table to clarify content areas and objectives that need improvement.

Campus: La Vernia Junior High School		District: La Vernia ISD		Principal: Maria Wildenstein	
AEIS-Identified Content Area	Grade:	AEIS Data Evidence	CIP-Identified Objectives		
Content Area #1 Mathematics	7	2007 - 88% 2006 - 81% All Students	#1 Math scores in grade 7 will increase to a minimum of 92% for the 2009/2010 school year.		
			#2 Mathematics will be incorporated throughout the 7 <sup>th</sup> grade curriculum to the extent possible to reinforce math skills.		
Content Area #2 Mathematics	8	2007 - 81% 2006 - 85% All Students	#1 Math scores in grade 8 will increase to a minimum of 90% for the 2009/2010 school year.		
			#2 Mathematics will be incorporated throughout the 8 <sup>th</sup> grade curriculum to the extent possible to reinforce math skills.		
Content Area #3 Mathematics	8	2007 – 59% 2006 – 75% Econ Disadvantaged	#1 Math scores for the Economically Disadvantaged sub-population students in grade 8 will increase to a minimum of 90% for the 2009/2010 school year.		
			#2 A mentoring program will be established to help students who are economically or otherwise disadvantaged to provide additional support for student achievement and academic excellence.		
Content Area #4 Science	8	2007 - 87% 2006 - 83% All Students	#1 Science scores in grade 8 will increase to a minimum of 92% for the 2009/2010 school year.		
			#2 Emphasis will be placed on science by holding special Science Career Days. Science will be integrated into the 8 <sup>th</sup> grade Reading and Social Studies curriculums to the extent possible to reinforce science concepts and knowledge.		

Select a content area/objective for your learner-centered staff development. To do this, answer the following question:

Based on the data, which content-area should be the principal's highest priority? Explain why you think so.

Mathematics should be the principal's highest priority, and is currently the focus of planned assistance through a recent restructuring of the Math department and a redesign of the curriculum. Mathematics is lower performing for both grades 7 and 8. In our case, supplemental grant funding has been applied for in an effort to revamp the curriculum and bring in added resources that can be used equally well whether a student falls within the camps of the "haves" or the "have nots" to help overcome the impact of being economically disadvantaged.

Professional development must be designed as a two-part workshop; first, to help these math teachers focus on the diverse learning styles of their students, and to find new ways to motivate and support students. Teachers must also learn how focus extra assistance on a student without causing them to "stand out" in class or be identified as "different" solely because they are in a sub-population. Secondly, teachers must learn to be on top of the situation by using data analysis early in the year to identify which students are in need of extra assistance before they fall too far behind to recover, and then using ongoing data from benchmark testing and other sources to constantly adjust the content to the needs of the students. Therefore, my professional development will be two half-day sessions, Improved Teacher Best Practices to Enhance Junior High Mathematics, and Analysis of Student Performance Data to Refine and Target the Delivery of Junior High Mathematics Instruction.

How can a leader use the AEIS to initiate the development of an instructional focus for a campus?

Careful analysis of the AEIS data is critical to determine where the areas of concern lie so that resources and professional development can be directed towards a solution. We are mandated by NCLB as well as by moral obligation to insure all students have an equal chance to learn and this is critical – if a teacher does not agree with this tenet then they should not be in the teaching profession.

The AEIS data can also be used to find not only which subject area (or areas) are most critical to address, but by using the classroom/teacher-level reports available to a principal, we can identify which teachers are having the greatest success and use them as mentor teachers, and identify which teachers are most in need of improvement so that we can help them improve or, if they are unable/unwilling to improve, help them move on.